

AN
ANSWER
TO THE
Call to Humiliation:
OR,
A VINDICATION
OF THE
Church of England,

From the Reproaches and Objections of
W. Woodward, in Two Fast Sermons, Preach'd in
his Conventicle at *Lemster*, in the County of *Hereford*,
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ANSWER TO THE

Call to HUMILIATION:

OR

A Vindication of the *Church of England*.

WHEN I first met with this importunate *Call to Humiliation*, I wonder'd how it came into the Head of that Minister, to call upon the *Church of England* in a *Conventicle*; he might as well have call'd upon the *Swiss Church* in *Poland*, or the *Quakers* in *Persepolis*. How absurd was it to summon the *Church of England* to the Stool of Repentance in a Presbyterian Assembly at *London*, and to proclaim a Fast for Persecution to those whom he pretends were persecuted by her? But tho' the *Church* was out of his Audience, yet it was matter of great Edification to his Hearers, to calumniate and reproach her; and I presume at the next gathering he was well rewarded for it. See how this Minister keeps his Days of *Humiliation*: he Fasts notoriously for *Strife and Debate*; Instead of healing our Wounds, he enlarges and enflames them; he sets forth the Sufferings of his Dissenters, with Hyperbole's, and lying aggravations, to what purpose, but to exulcerate and enrage them? as if he were sent in the Spirit of *Elijah*, he calls in effect for Fire from Heaven upon us. The Prophanation of our Fast Day, was not enough for his Invectives; withal, he could find

Ralph T. Hovey Oct 8, 1943 (ms)

but little work of *Humiliation* for his own Sectaries, but with loads of Sackcloth and Ashes he overwhelms our Church, and in a word, he has laid out his whole Gift of Calling, and Clamoring, and Railing upon it.

The best Apology against such a Libel, would be Patience and Silence; and the best Answer, that which Mr. Hooker made to certain Reasons and Raileries of the Puritans, to his Reasons, No, and to his Raileries Nothing. But there is sometimes a necessity of answering some Persons according to their folly; the applause and triumph with which this Pamphlet has been cried up by his followers, the Confidence wherewith they pronounce every thing unanswerable, that is not answer'd; and the Complement of * *Dumb Dogs*, which this Holy Rabbshake has bestowed upon us, do make it necessary to say something in our vindication, and to shew how easie it is to defend our Church, against the feeble Assaults of a *Lemster Conventicle*.

In answer to his Two Sermons, as he calls them, I will consider,

1. His Declaration about Federalism.

2. The Reasons and Objections which he pleads for his Non-conformity.

Days of *Humiliation* are at all times necessary to the Church of Christ, which while it is Militant, will be never so far without Spot and Blemish, as not to stand in need of publick expiations; but when the Judgements of God, are either imminent, or present, and the unbounded wickedness of a Nation, do force them down from Heaven, then certainly is the time to weep, to Sanctify a Fast, and to call all the Inhabitants of the Land to a Publick Repentance. Our Church on such occasions hath contented her Self to follow the example of Religious Men in Scripture, and to prescribe such general Confessions, as are universally true of all, and particularly, applicable to the Case of every one; there is a Confession in that last Office, so full and comprehensive, that no one, who is not much in love with Cavil, can accuse the insufficiency of it. But this Minister is dissatisfied with it, he hath searched among the *accursed* *Books* (as he styles it) of Ecclesiastical Affairs, and after much pains in rummaging, * he finds, that the *accursed* thing * lies hid under the covering of Decency and Order, Penal Laws, Laws for Uniformity, Subscriptions, Declarations, Liturgies, Articles, Laws for Communion, and Forms of Prayer. Thus one whole Constitution is *accursed* in his Opinion;

* p. 27.

* See p. 10, 11.

on; even the *Articles* of our Religion are not excepted, tho' approv'd by all the Protestant Churches, and Seal'd with the Blood of Martyrs, and the Prayers of all Churches, for at least 100 Years together, have been nothing but *Curse*; and, as *Adam's* Sacrilege, an *Abomination to the Lord*.

But Persecution is the great *Rock of Offence*, and he is very angry at the *Compilers* of the Office, because they have not mention'd it in the Confession; he cannot forgive a certain * *Bishop* in particular, who, he thinks, assisted in composing the Form, and had before Declar'd, that Persecution had not a little contributed to fill up the measure of the sins of a Church, and that they who were guilty, ought seriously to profess their Repentance of it; But he observes, *That he said this before he was a Bishop*, which is, to insinuate, that it is no wonder he should now prevaricate, and that he was fall'n from Grace by taking a Bishoprick on him; But here he had an occasion of shewing his Spight at the Order, and even a *Reconciling Bishop*, could have no Quarter from him. Now, for once, let Persecution be as heinous a Sin as he can make it, and let it be granted, that many Church men have been guilty of it; Yet, Why must it be particularly confess'd in a general Humiliation? Why more than Drunkenness, Perjury, Blasphemy, or Whoredom? Would he have every individual Confess, that he has been a Persecutor, a Drunkard, a Blasphemer, and a Whoremaster? If many are innocent of these Crimes, so they are of Persecution; There are thousands of *Congregations* that never persecuted any one, and yet this *Unjust Judge* would force them to plead Guilty of it. Be the Sin never so *Epidemical*, yet, why should I confess it, if I am not Guilty? And as for those that are, let him read over the *Confessions*, and he will find, they are in general Expressions included in it, and general Confessions are sufficient, because no others can be accommodated to so many millions of *Christians*; but nothing will please that *Minister*, unless the whole Church lie prostrate at his Feet, and submit to the Discipline he imposes, and then, perhaps, he would think her sufficiently humbled, and condescend to pardon her.

Let us now reflect a little on the extremity of their Sufferings, as he is pleas'd to represent them; and one single Paragraph out of all his *Tragical* Aggravations will be sufficient. He assures us, * *That it is clear as the Sun, that for near 30 years last past, 1600 Ministers of the Gospel have suffer'd very hard things upon the account of Conscience, by reason of great Fines, and long Imprison-*

* The Bishop of Sarum.

See his Ep. Ded. and p. 11.

* p. 4.

ments.

ments. At the *Restoration* there were many Ministers ejected who had either intruded themselves into the *Freeholds* of others, or had *Usurp'd* their Benefices in the times of Schism and Rebellion, without lawful Qualifications; so that they were ejected, not for Conscience, but Intrusion; whether they were just 1600, is not worth enquiry; but that they all suffer'd for Conscience, cannot be so clear as he pretends, for I suppose, neither he, nor we can know the Consciences of 1600, without something of Omniscience; but that all the 1600 did suffer by long Imprisonment, is an unconscionable overlabing, and 'tis as clear as the Sun, that it is a notorious Falshood. He adds, *That many of them have dyed for want of natural Bread, and that both the Shepherds and the Flocks have been starved.* What! Have their Ministers died with Famine? Have whole Congregations perished for want of Bread? This is certainly all Fiction and Romance; or, if you will, the Rhetorick of common Beggars, who with doleful Complaints of Starving, cheat the People into Compassion. I Grant, *That many Families of Dissenters have been distress'd by Penal Laws*, tho' I think he can never make it out, that they were many thousands. But the conclusion of this Tragedy, is beyond measure extravagant. If, says he, *the Sufferings of our Brethren were written at large, as the Sufferings of the Saints at other times have been, Mr. Fox his Book of Martyrs, would be but an Euciridion in comparison of it.* That *Work* is an account of the Sufferings of Christians, from the Crucifixion of our Saviour, to the Reign of Queen Elizabeth; and as Voluminous as it is, it has not bulk enough for the Dissenters Sufferings since the Restoration; nay, it is but a little Epitome in comparison. They, alas! have suffered more in 30 years, than the whole Church in 1650; and the *Martyrologies* of the whole Catholic Church, may be infinitely exceeded by the *Acts and Monuments* of a few little Conventicles. One would think that many Myriads of Dissenters had suffered Martyrdom, That every individual Church of England-man had destroyed as many as *Dioctesian*; and that all England had been a Sea of Blood for 30 years together; when in the mean time, not one of them suffered death for his Religion; not many of them were ruined in their Estates, and pecuniary punishments, were the only persecution of almost all of them. Yet he has the Confidence to say, * *That the Church of England had taken into her band the Bloody Club of Cain to slay the Dissenters; that his Weapon was a Club is revealed to him by * Buchels crew, to whom the Cabala was deriv'd; but that the Church*

* P. 11.

* P. 4.

Church of England has used it against the Dissenters, is the revelation of *Beelzebub*, for the Father of Lies can be his only Author for it. Let him name but one Dissenter that has been martyr'd by the Church; and he shall have my Licence to revile her with all the odious Names, from *Cain* to the *Apocalyptic Whore*, in Scripture: But if that be impossible, he may still revile, if he please; but I think he will be no where believed, but in his *Conventicle* and his *Parish*; so the place of his retreat is * called by the fifth Evangelist; that he may be parallell'd to one of the former.

But this magnifying of Sufferings is an old Artifice of Dissenters; so did their Ancestors the *Donatists*, as may be seen in *St. Austin*, and so did the *Papish Priests*, (their late Brethren and Allies,) in the time of Queen *Elizabeth*, as may be seen in *Cresswell's Philopater Treatise* of and the Books of *Parsons*. Behold how one of them exclaimeth, *Where are now the old Tyrants of the World, Nero, Decius, Dioclesian, Maxentius, and the rest of the great Persecutors of the Christians? Where is Genferick and Hunricus, with their Arrian Heresicks?* Alluding to the Persecutions of the State here as infinitely beyond them. This was just such another Outcry about Persecution as this Ministers. And how did the Statesmen of those Times apologize for their Severity? * The sum of thier defence was this; That what they did was necessary to the Preservation of the State, and that their Treasons and Seditions occasion'd the hard Laws against them. And Will not the same defence serve to justify the Laws against the Dissenters? The severest Laws, and the severest Proceedings against them, were in the Time of Queen *Elizabeth*, they were then suspended, deprived, imprison'd, banish'd, and some of them even * executed, for their scandalous Writings; and the ground of these Proceedings may be learnt from the Queen her self in the Speech of the Lord Keeper *Puckering* to the Parliament, * which was delivered by her Command and Direction. There he tells them, That they were commanded by her Majesty to give no ear to the Solicitations of the Puritans, of whom he declares, *It may be doubted, whether they, or the Jesuits, do offer more danger, or be more speedily to be repress'd, and this Reason is there given for it, because they publish, in their Books, and teach in all their Conventicles, sundry Opinions, not only dangerous to the Realm, but also Derogatory to her sacred Majesty and her Crown, and by separation of themselves from the Unity of their fellow Subjects, and by abusing the sacred Authority of their Prince, they do joyn with the Jesuits in opening the Door, and preparing the Way, to the Spanish Inva-*

* Ep. Ded.

* See a

the Lord

Burluigh,

Entitled,

The Exe-

cution of

Justice in

England,

for Main-

tenance of

publick

Peace.

* As the

1 Eliz. c. 2.

23 Eliz.

c. 1.

33 Eliz.

c. 1.

* Barrow

and Green-

wood.

* Transcri-

bed by Dr.

Pierce

from his

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Writing,

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lished in

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gainst Mr.

Baxter,

Jan. 1659.

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vation, that is threatened against the Realm. Thus said the Queen
 her self, by the Mouth of her Lord Keeper; and so effectual was
 this Speech, that the Parliament then passed the Act of the 34
 Eliz. the severest against the Dissenters in the whole Body of
 our Laws. But a larger account of the true Reasons of those
 hard Laws against the Papists and Dissenters may be seen in a Let-
 ter of Sir Francis Walsingham her Secretary, to Monsieur Cray-
 a Frenchman. The Preservation of the State against their Se-
 ditious Practices, is there assign'd as the true Cause of those Se-
 verities. And as to the Puritans, he concludes, that after they
 had been a great while tolerated; When they descended into that
 vile and base Means of Defacing the Government of the Church by re-
 discounting Pasquils; when they began to make many Subjects in doubt to
 take Oaths; which is one of the fundamental Points of Justice and Sta-
 bility; when they began both to vaunt of their Strength and Number of their
 Partisans; and to use Comminations, that their Cause would prevail
 through uproar and violence; then it appeared to be no more Deal, no
 more Conscience, but more Faction and Division; and therefore, though
 the State were compell'd to hold somewhat a harder hand to restrain
 them than before, yet was it with as great a moderation, as the Peace
 of the State or Church could permit. Such were the Reasons of the
 Laws and Prosecutions against them in the happy Days of Queen
 Elizabeth: And have not these Observations been since confirm'd
 by awful Experience? Is it any wonder, that at the Restoration
 of our Church and Government, (which had been destroy'd by a most
 unjustifiable Rebellion, when the whole Kingdom had been turn'd into
 an Aceldama, and the best of Kings was barbarously murdered,) the
 Law-givers should look back upon the Miseries they had felt, and
 secure the King, the Kingdom, and the Church, against the increase
 of those Sedaries that had so lately destroy'd them; and yet it is
 notorious, that these Laws were never rigorously executed; but
 when necessity requir'd it: Their Assemblies were ever tolerated
 or conniv'd at, when themselves were pleas'd to shew that favour
 to the Government; but when they began to libel, associate, and
 plot, against the King, and it was evident, that the ruin of Church
 and State was again attempted; and all the Sedaries were ready
 to contribute their Strength and Power to effect it, was it not then
 high time for the Government to oppose them, to secure it self
 by the Execution of Laws, and to prosecute those who were resolu-
 ed to ruin it. They had Liberty enough, till it was made a
 Cloak of Maliciousness, and the Government did never persecute
 then

*It is prin-
 ted at large
 in Dr. Burn-
 net's Hist.
 of the Re-
 form. par. 2
 lib. 3. p.
 420.

to situate
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them, but when it was persecuted by them. How impertinent then is it to clamour at the Church, because the State made Laws for its own preservation. How unjust to arraign their Governors as Tyrannical, because they would not be destroyed; and how impious to call suffering for *Sedition*, persecution for the Gospel?

If these *Ministers* had any regard to the Judgment of St. * *Augustine*, it would be to some purpose to transcribe the efficacious Reasons; with which he justifies the use of Temporal Penalties, for the reducing of *Dissenters*; but however they may deal with him, the agreement of their chief *Divines*, the declar'd Judgment of their infallible *Assembly*, and their own undeniable practice, when they had power, will be enough to silence and condemn them.

The *Dissenters* of late have wearied the World with their outcries against Persecution, they have magnified Liberty of Conscience as the *Magna Charta* of Mankind, and cryed it up in their Addresses to K. *James*, as the restoring of God himself to his *Empire*. But nothing in the World that thinks and sees, can possibly believe them; for their own Writings, both past and present, do manifestly shew, that they never condemn *Persecution*, but when they cannot *Persecute*. It may be prov'd by a vast cloud of witnesses, That *Toleration* has been ever damn'd by the *Presbyterians*; and therefore it unavoidably follows, that *Persecution* has been ever approv'd by them. I could make good this by a deduction from their first Apostle Mr. *Carmichael*, to their present Patriarch Mr. *Baxter*; but in a Matter so notorious, so much labour, is unnecessary. I appeal to the Testimonies of * *Twenty* of their most eminent *Preachers*, who in the Reign of *Presbytery*, did in their Sermons and Writings, with great Zeal, inveigh against *Toleration*, as unlawful in it self, and destructive unto Church and State: I refer you likewise to a very pathetical Letter to the *Assembly*, Subscribed by all the *London Divines*, Ann. 1655. wherein they expressly Declare their abhorrence of *Toleration*, and exhort the *Assembly* to allow no Liberty to the *Independants*, as being notorious Schismatics; and both this Letter, and that collection of *Testimonies* are to be found in a Pamphlet, Entituled, *Toleration disprov'd*, which was Printed at *Oxford*, Ann. 1670. But hear the *Divines* of that *Assembly* it self, expostulating with their Dissenting Brethren the *Independants*. * *They desire an Answer to this one thing. Whether some must be denied Liberty of their Conscience in matter of Pre-*

* *Aug. Town.*
2. *Epist.*
48. *contra*
Donat. &
Regit. de
vi Corrig.
Heres.

* *They*
were these,
Dr. Bur-
gess, Mr.
Ward, Mr.
William
Good, Mr.
Tho. Tho-
rowgood,
Mr.
Humf,
Hardwick,
Arthur
Salwey,
Will. Rey-
nar, Geo-
Hughes,

* *Papers*

lice, or none? If none, then say they, we must renounce our **Covenant**, and let in **Prelacy** again, and all other ways; If a denial of **Liberty** unto some, may be just, then **Uniformity** may be settled without any **Tyranny**: They charge them farther with * opening a gap for all **Sells** to challenge such a **Liberty** as their due; And add, Thus this **Liberty** was denied by the Churches of New England, and they have as just grounds to deny it as they. Thus we see, that not the **Presbyterians** only, but even the new **Light of Independancy** is against **Toleration**; and that persecution of **Dissenters** was not only their **Doctrine**, but their **Vow** and **Covenant** also. In that **Covenant** they Swore to extirpate **Prelacy**, and to endeavour after **Uniformity** in **Doctrine**, **Discipline** and **Worship**; and is it not a wonderful Confidence in this **Minister**, to Arraign the Church for persecuting, and at the same time to contend for the obligation of a persecuting **Covenant**, to reckon **Uniformity** among the *accursed Stuff*, and then Declare that they are bound by *Oath* to settle it.

But their practice at last, is the clearest demonstration of their **Doctrine**. Behold, an * **Ordinance** of Parliament against the use of the **Liturgy**; If any person hereafter shall at any time use, or cause to be used the **Book of Common Prayer** in any Church, or Publick place of **Worship**, or in any **Private** place or **Family** within the **Kingdom**; every person so offending, for the first offence shall pay the sum of **Five**, for the Second, **Ten** pounds, and for the Third, shall suffer **One** whole years imprisonment, without **Bail** or **Mainprize**. Do any of our **Laws** forbid the **Dissenters** to serve God in their own **Families**, as they please? or where is there such an abridgment of **Liberty** in our **Statute Book**? But yet their proceedings were much more cruel than their **Ordinances**; so far were they from allowing any indulgence to the Church of **England**, that they would not allow **Liberty** of Conscience to the **Supreme Head** and **Governor** of it; They refused to permit their **King** the use of the **Common Prayer** in his own Chappel, and insisted to obtrude the **Directory** upon him against his **Conscience**; so that he had reason to complain, as he did, of their offering violence to the **Conscience** of their **Sovereign**, and to say, If it be **Liberty** of Conscience they desire, he who wants it, is most ready to give it. Nay, those **Presbyterians**, when they had him in their custody, were so inhumane, as to deny him the attendance of so much as one **Chaplain** for the performance of **Divine Offices**, tho the Good **King** did often and earnestly Request it, which (as himself observes in his * **Meditations** on it) was a piece of **Rage** and **Barbarism**, greater, than is ever us'd by **Christians**, to the mean-

* Cited out of the same Papers, in his unreasonableness of Separation, p. 69.

* An Ordinance for putting in execution the Directory, August. 11. 1645.

mecl. of Jan. 18. after the Votes of Non-Address. * In his Epistol. Epistol.

est prisoners, and greatest malefactors. Thus it was that they dealt with their Sovereign; and the whole Household were Treated no better than the Master of it.

It is known to all the World, how the Episcopal Party were plundered, Sequestred, Decimated, Imprisoned, and totally Ruin'd by them; With what rigor their rebellious Oaths, Covenants, Engagements and Abjurations were impos'd, and that they were all ejected out of the Churches, Colledges, Schools, and Universities. The Lord * Clarendon tells us, *That the Reverend Bishops who were left alive, and out of prison, being strip'd of all that was their own, preserved themselves from Famine, by stooping to the lowest Offices of Teaching Schools, and Officiating in private Families for their Bread, which, together with the Alms of Charitable Persons, was the only portion of the poor Bishops, and all the faithful Clergy of the Church of England.* * Sir Henry Tolverton computes, (and he thought that he was not mistaken) that there were 8000, who forsook all for the Covenant; and of an 729 Parishes within the Bills of Mortality in London, 15 were ejected, besides the Prebends of St. Pauls and Westminster.

* Survey of the Leviathan, p. 305.

* His Preface to Bishop Mortons defence of Episcopacy. P. 39.

And now it will not be improper to add the Reply of Arch-Bishop Bramhall to Mr. Baxter's Complaint, That the most Learned, Godly, Painful and Peaceable Men were ejected, because they durst not use the Ceremonies. Let Mr. B. say he, * *sum up into one Catalogue, all the Nonconformists throughout the Kingdom of England, ever since the beginning of the Reformation, who have been cast aside at anytime, because they durst not use the Ceremonies; I dare abate him all the rest of the Kingdom, and only exhibit the Martyrologies of London, and the Two Universities; or a List of those, who in these late intestine Wars, have been imprison'd and banish'd by his Party in these three places alone, or left to the merciless World to beg their Bread, for no other Crime but Loyalty, and because they stood affected to the Ancient Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England; and they shall double them for Number, and for Learning, Piety, Industry, and the love of Peace, exceed them incomparably.* This is an assertion that shall stand unconfuted for ever, and let every one now judge between the Church of England and the Separatists, which have been the greatest Persecutors.

* P. 643. of his Works.

Thus have I been forced to retort the accusation, and to make it good by undeniable Proofs against them; that I might silence, if possible, their Hypocritical Clamours, and convince their Followers, that they are inexcusable in Judging that in others, which

they do themselves; and that of all men they are the oddest to pull the *Maze* out of the Church's Eye, when the *Beam* is in their own. If Persecution be the *accursed Thing*, why have not the *Dissenters* themselves appointed Days of Humiliation for it? Why do they not give it a Place in their Confessions? Is it not strange, that, in 40 years time, they should not express their Repentance? And (to use this Ministers Expression,) is it not fit, that for one Tear of the Church of England, they should drop ten, or an hundred for one. It will be objected, that some of them, of late years, have condemn'd all Persecution for Religion; but have they ever kept a Day of Humiliation for it? Do they not think themselves bound by *Covenant* to extirpate the whole Government of the Church of England? And notwithstanding the Clamours of that Party against Persecution, is it not evident, that where ever they get Power, they immediately persecute. We have two Books already of the History of their Persecutions in Scotland, and when to the extirpation of all the Bishops, the ruin of Six hundred Ministers, and the Desolation of four Universities, they shall add the Destruction of the miserable Reliques of that Church, I will not say their Story will be much greater than Fox's *Martyrology*, but I think the *Dissenters* Sufferings will be but an *Enchiridion* to it. In the mean time we have a fair Specimen, however of the moderation of that Party, whose tender Mercies have been always cruel, and a clear Demonstration of what may be expected by us, if G O D, in His just judgments, should deliver up our Church unto their Fury. And yet these are the men that exclaim against Persecution, and cry out against the Church of England as cruel and tyrannical; but let them remember that Reflection, which was long since extorted by their Clamours, * That they were the Ingenuity of Adonibezek to rest on the Thumbs and Toes, which they have cut off from others, and think themselves bound to do it again, if it were in their Power.

* Dr. St. Sermon on the Mischiefs of Sec. par. p. 55.

But after all, this Minister, though he furiously declaims against Persecution, and with so much Malice and Atrimony arraigns the Church of England for it, yet if his invectives be well considered, one shall find that he nowhere declares for Liberty of Conscience, and that no one ought to be persecuted for his Religion. When he condemns Persecution, he adds always, * for the Truth, which is a plain Intimation, that Persecution for Error he accounts Lawful; if he really does not, to what purpose is that Limitation? Why did he not openly condemn all Punishments for Conscience,

* See p. 3, 4, 6, 8, 11.

more than he would have condemned the constant Doctrine of his Party, and though he was too wary to do that, yet it would have exposed the Design of his Sermons, if he had spoke out honestly, and asserted the Lawfulness of persecuting men for their Errors. But if this be his Judgment, (and that Limitation is a strong Presumption of it,) then the sum of all is this: That the *Presbyterians* may lawfully persecute all other Churches, but must never be persecuted themselves by any, because all other Churches are erroneous, and the whole Inference of Truth is theirs, and it is only the Persecution of Truth that is condemned by them.

It is evident, that he himself founds the Iniquity of the severe Proceedings against them, upon this ground alone, that they suffered for the Truth. For to this Objection, * that the Nonconformists have been suffered for their Faults, his only Reply is this, Let above a fair Hearing before we be judged, the Persecution of Truth is a great Sin whether it be found, or then he immediately proposes the Reasons of their Nonconformity, and concludes at last, * That if in all these Things the Nonconformists are in the right, and have witnessed to the Truth, then might the Church of England to hang down her head, &c. And thus, as he states the case himself, if the Dissenters have not witnessed to the Truth, the Church of England is not guilty, and all their Outcries about Persecution must pass for nothing. Here then lies the stress of the dispute, Whether the Nonconformists have Truth on their side, and were therefore really persecuted for Righteousness sake? I proceed therefore to examine what he says.

The Reasons and Objections which he pleads for his Nonconformity.

His first Stumbling block is the Subscription in the Act of Uniformity, with the Oath in the Oxford Act, in which are these Words, I, A. B. do declare, That it is unlawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to rise arms against the King. Again I do swear, That it is not lawful for me. He adds, I do declare and swear, and he requires three Things to be observed;

First, A man may believe a Proposition to be true, but would not be willing to swear it; and this Objection is a perfect Cavil. He that asserts a Proposition to be true, does mean only that he is convinced of its Truth, and he that swears it is true, does only call God to witness that he is convinced of it. Nothing is more obvious than that in all assertory Oaths, when we swear to the Truth of Things, we are understood to declare no more than our own Belief and Knowledge concerning them; and thus, when I swear

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New York

that it is unlawful to resist, nothing more can be understood, than that I am fully satisfied of it; if I believe it unlawful, I may subscribe and declare that it is so, and if I can do that, I may also swear it, since in this Case an *Oath*, superadded to a *Declaration*, must follow the nature of the *Principal*, and can be nothing else but a Sacred Confirmation of my sincerity in declaring; and I am morally certain, that no *Magistrate* in *England* would have refused to administer the *Oath* with this Interpretation.

Secondly, he objects, that *Barclay*, *Grotius*, and others who have written in favour of *Kings*, do yet allow some Cases, in which it is lawful to resist them, and if a *King* does govern by his Will, and not by Law, he doth excedere de jure, that is, he forfeits his Right to Govern. I answer, that an Arbitrary *King* does forfeit his Right, is affirmed by neither of these Authors, but is contradicted by them; and though it be true, that *Barclay*, *Grotius*, and others, whether *Republicans*, *Jesuits*, or *Presbyterians*, have allowed Exceptions for resisting, yet I am sure the Holy Ghost has made none in Scripture; they that resist shall receive Damnation, is denounced without any Limitation, and how shall we limit, where GOD hath not limited, or distinguish, where He hath not distinguished. So was the Rule understood and practiced by the first and best of *Christians*, so was it taught by the first Reformers of our Church, and some of them with their Blood bore witness to it. The *Popes* were the first *Christians* that taught Resistance, but though an *Angel* from Heaven had taught it, we have received another Doctrine, and could not have departed from it.

Thirdly, he adds, That all the Nobility and Gentry of *England* and *Scotland*, and all the Protestant Princes beyond Sea, in their Proceedings against *King James*, have justified the Nonconformists in refusing the *Oath*. Now I have no Correspondence with all these Princes, Nobility and Gentry, and therefore know not their minds about it, but I am sure he cannot make good his all without taking Sanctuary in Hyperbole. There be many that think those Proceedings may be justified without justifying Resistance, but I believe there are no Princes that will allow it against themselves, and if the Majority of the Nobility and Gentry do justify what they once condemn'd, their Authority can be urged on neither side, and though there be a Revolution of Opinions as well as Governments, yet the nature of Things is immutable, and Truth the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.

His

His Second scruple is about Reordination, in *the Ordination by Presb. as Presbyters were not sufficient, without the laying on of the hands of Apol. p. 59. those, we now call Bishops.* But first, since this Minister hath ^{† 2. / *shop*} now undertaken to argue, he should have prov'd, that Re- ^{Hall's, and} ordination implies a Nullity of their former Orders; But, as no ^{Mortons} Declaration of their insufficiency is requir'd, so, neither is it ^{Books in} imply'd in the nature of the thing, nor understood to be so by ^{Episcopacy,} Construction of the Fact, as appears from the Reordination of ma- ^{Archbi-} ny French Ministers, whose Orders have never been condemned by ^{shop Bram-} our Church, who never intended to renounce them by that Acti- ^{hall in his} on, nor are supposed to do so. Secondly, tho' the Ordination ^{Sup.} of Presbyters be granted to be sufficient, yet this will not justify ^{Salve, Dr.} the Nonconformists Ordinations; There is an evident difference be- ^{Durell's} twixt the Case of these Ministers and the Presbyters of some ^{Church} Foreign Churches. ^{Government, Say-}

1. Those Foreign Divines, tho' their Churches are not under ^{well's E-} Episcopal Government, yet they do not separate from ^{vangelical} Episcopal and Catholic Communion, but have all own'd Communion with the Church of ^{and Catho-} England. Blondel, their best Advocate for Presbyterian Parity, ^{lick Uni-} does yet condemn Separation from Bishops, as *Schismatical*, and ^{ty, and} expressly * declares, that *Aerius* was therefore an *Heretick*, be- ^{lately in} cause he asserted, That separation was to be made from those who ad- ^{the judg-} mitted any difference between Bishops and Presbyters. But their ap- ^{ment of} proving of Episcopal Government, and condemning Separation ^{Foreign,} from it as *Schismatical*, has been so often, so irrefragably * pro- ^{reformed} ved, that there can be no longer any Controversie about it. But ^{Divines.} on the other side, the present Nonconformists do make Episcopal ^{* Ibid. p. 47} Government the chief reason of their Separation, and condemn it ^{and Bram-} as unlawful and *Antichristian*, which no Reformed Church or Di- ^{hall's Re-} vine that we know, did ever before them; and this is certainly a ^{plication} very material difference between them. ^{to affirm}

2. The Ordination of Presbyters without Bishops in those Fo- ^{the Bishop} reign Churches, has been generally defended by the plea of Ne- ^{of Chalco-} cessity; thus it has been defended by some of the Foreign ^{don, p. 164.} ^{of his} themselves, and thus by many * Divines of our own Church. ^{Works.} As their circumstances were, it was impossible for them to have ^{* As Down-} Bishops, and therefore they wanted them out of invincible neces- ^{ham, Ma-} sity; whereas our Presbyterians are incapable of that Plea, they ^{son, Field,} reject the Authority of Bishops, and Ordain in opposition to them, ^{Andrews,} and therefore it is evident, they are under no necessity, and con- ^{and lately} sequently their Orders may be thought insufficient, without in- ^{by Dr. Sher-} ^{lock in his} ^{Vindicati-} ^{on of the} ^{defence of} ^{Dr. Still.}

peaching the validity of Foreign Ordinations. And thus having separated their Cause, from that of other Protestants, I proceed to examine what he urges for it, and his first Reason is this;

1. *That the word of God makes no difference between the Bishop and the Presbyter, or Pastor of a Church, and he cites those Texts, Acts 20. 17, 28. and Tit. 1. 5, 6, 7.* to prove that those Names

are promiscuously used. Three ways have been taken to answer this Objection;

1. That both the Names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in Scripture, denote always the Protestant Bishop, and not the Modern *Presbyter*.

2. That even in Scripture, the Names are so distinguished, that a mere *Presbyter* alone is never call'd a *Bishop*, tho' a *Bishop* is often call'd a *Presbyter*.

Both these Opinions have been well defended, and perhaps, it is impossible to confute them; but to cut off all superfluous Disputes;

it is enough to Answer, 3. That tho' the Names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are not distinct in Scripture, yet it is a very fallacious way of arguing from the indistinction of Names, to infer the

Identity of Offices. St. John the Apostle calls himself twice a *Presbyter*, & *Andronicus Junia*, and *Epaphroditus*, (who according to this Minister's opinion, were only Presbyters,) are reciprocally

call'd *Apostles*; Are the Offices of an *Apostle* and *Presbyter* therefore really the same? This one instance is a clear Demonstration of

the Falshood of that Consequence. Though there was a confusion of Names, there was yet a distinction of Offices, and if that can be

proved, viz. *That in the Apostolical Churches, some single Persons had a Pre-eminency of Power and Authority over the other Presbyters*, it

will necessarily follow, that that Office, (to which the Name of Bishops is now appropriated,) is at least of *Apostolical* Institution.

Timothy and Titus * are granted by all Sides to have had such a Superiority; and the *Presbyterians* only pretend that their

Office was extraordinary, and expired with them; but this is affirmed without sufficient Proof; for what, though *Timothy* be required to

do the Work of an Evangelist, can they prove that this signifies any more than a Preacher of the Gospel? And if it could be proved to be a Temporary Office, how does it appear that his Episcopal

Power was a part of that Office, or that it was not distinct and separate from it? On the contrary it may be proved, by a Cloud of

Witnesses, that this Power was not Temporary, but was every where derived by Succession, upon single Persons; and particularly

as to the Succession of *Timothy* and *Titus*, we have this Confession

of

* By Dr. Hammond and Dr. Taylor.

* 2d Ep. John 6. 1. 3d Ep. 1. 1. Rom. 16. 7. * Phil. 2. 23.

* See Jus Divinum Ministerii Anglicani, P. 71, 72.

of De Meville. That the Episcopal Order was (of Apostolical Institution) — and that what some give to Timothy and Titus, whether Bishops or Presbyters, it is manifest that they had Bishops for their Successors and Heirs of their pre-eminency. And in fine, this precarious Presence of extraordinary Offices may with equal reason be urged, (as we find it is by Anabaptists, Quakers and Socinians) against the whole Order of the Ministry: and if it be admitted (as Mr. Baxter once confessed) we leave room for antichristian Wits, to question other Gospel Institutions, as Pastors and Sacraments, and so say they were but for one Age. The Sum is this, there is clear Evidence in Scripture, that there were some Officers who had Power of Jurisdiction over Presbyters, and therefore the Texts which he produces to shew the Community of Names can be no Argument against it.

But to justify Ordination by Presbyters, he cites, 1 Tim. 4. 14. where it is intimated that Timothy was ordained by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. To this it is answered, 1. That Presbytery there is taken for the Office of a Presbyter, and so the Sense runs thus, *neglect not the Gift, or Office of a Presbyter which was given thee by Prophecy with the Imposition of hands*, and this Sense is warranted by the Authority of *Calvin, and of St. *Jerome long before him. 2. If Presbytery be taken for the Ordainers, it may nevertheless be understood of such Presbyters as had a Superior Power over others, for as Apostles and Bishops are sometimes called Presbyters, so might they Collectively be called Presbytery, and accordingly it is observed, that the Apostles themselves are called by St. Ignatius, the Presbytery of the Church. 3. It is evident from 2 Tim. 1. 6. that St. Paul was the principal ordainer of him, and surely it is no good consequence, that if Presbyters may assist an Apostle or a Bishop at an Ordination, therefore they may ordain without him. He concludes, that Augustine, Jerome, and Chrysostome with many other Greeks and Latins, are of his Judgment, but he produces no passages out of any of these Authors, but asserts roundly, that they are all of his mind, and 'tis as easy to answer, that they are all against him, however, when he shall produce his Testimonies, it will be time enough to examine them.

Secondly, He proceeds to justify his Orders by the Authority of our own and Foreign Churches. All our learned Divines at the Reformation from Popery, held that Ordination by the Pastors of Churches (he means Presbyters) was valid and good. Thus he

* In his 3d. Ep. to Bishop Andrews, p. 181, 182.

* In his Christian Directory cited in the Unreason of Separ. p. 264.

* On the brief Account of Church Government, in Answer to the writings of the Presbyterians, p. 195. &c. * Calvin. Instit. lib. 4. c. 3. sect. 16. * St. Jerom. in Locum.

affirms on, without proving, many Greeks and Latines and all our Divines, are only confident Pirates and ought to pass for nothing; in short I desire him to produce any one of those Divines, that has allowed of Presbyterian Ordinations made in a Schismatical opposition to Bishops, and without the Case of necessity. But he adds, *The Twenty third Article of Manifesting in the Congregation, seems to speak as much*. That Article declares, *That it is not lawful to exercise the Ministry without a lawful Calling, and that those are lawfully called, who are called by Men, who have publick Authority given them in the Congregation*. I. e. the Church to do it. And how impertinent is this Allegation? was publick Authority ever given in our Church to Presbyters, to ordain Priests or Deacons? on the contrary, it is expressly provided in the Preface to the Form of Ordination in our Liturgy, that *whereas it is evident unto all Men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles time there hath been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons*—therefore in the future aforesaid Orders should be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in the Church of England; it is requisite, that no Man shall exercise any of them, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted according to the Forms hereafter following, and I hope it is evident from that Form, that a Bishop is necessary to Ordination.

He goes on and affirms, *That the French, Belgick and Helvetic Churches, besides many others, are of his Judgment. All the other Protestant Churches (excepting only Geneva) have Episcopal Government, and that they allow Ordination by Presbyters in opposition to it, is an Assertion that may well be thought incredible, till it be sufficiently proved*; and as for the Churches he mentions, their Divines account the Non-Conformists Ordinations Schismatical, and the best defence of their own is necessity. But he needs not name the Church of Scotland, for Scotland, (says he) hath justified all our Non-Conformity. By Scotland he means the Presbyterian party of that Kingdom, & the lesser part for the whole; but however, if Scotland justifies them, it is the only Church in the world that do so.

Lastly, He adds, *our Diocesan Bishops may glory over us, as the Kings Bishops, or Bishops of the State, which is just the Railery of the Papists, Parliament Bishops, and Nags-head Bishops*. But are our Bishops ordained by the King and State? are they not Christ's Bishops, and Scripture Bishops? No, for this new Apostle of Rome, does Peremptorily tell them, *that they must not pretend to be*

* Quibus potestas publice concessa est in Ecclesia Art. Edit. 1552 & 1562.

* Approved Art. 26, and established by Acts of Parl. Reg. Edw. 6. & Eliz. 2. 58.

* See the Letters about the Persecution in Scotland p. 58.

It will be said to the Superior Bishops of the first Two hundred years, who were of great Reputation. But with Sabmillion to his Apostolicity, I reply, that the Presbyterian Assembly have granted, that Timothy and Titus had superiour Authority over Presbyters, and therefore our Bishops having the same Authority, may pretend to *kindle* with them. 2. They acknowledge also *after Blondel*, that above 120 years after Christ, Bishops were set over Presbyters; so that they grant them to be introduced within 40 or 50 years after the decease of all the Apostles. 3. The Epistles of Ignatius (who was Contemporary with the Apostles, and suffered Martyrdom within nine years after the decease of St. John) do manifestly shew, that the superiour Authority of Bishops was then established in the Church, and therefore certainly by Apostolical Institution. And the Authority of these Epistles has been so demonstratively cleared from all Exceptions by Bishop Pearson, that there is now no Controversie about it. 4. Mr. Chillingworth at the end of his Book, has plainly demonstrated the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy, and he sums up his Demonstration in these Words:

Episcopal Government is acknowledged to have been received universally in the Church, presently after the Apostles times.

Between the Apostles times, and this presently after, there was not time enough for, nor possibility of so great an Alteration;

And therefore, there was no such Alteration as is pretended. And therefore, Episcopacy being confessed to be so Ancient and Catholick, must be granted also to be Apostolick. *Quod erat Demonstrandum.*

And I hope this Minister will condescend to answer this Demonstration, when he writes again; or however be so modest, as not to conclude so confidently, when he has proved nothing. But behold the Chair of Infallibility! Wherefore I say, that Ordination by the hands of the Pastors of Churches, filled with the Holy Ghost, is much more eligible than by Diocesan Bishops; a very peremptory Decree, but we must not question it, for Pythagoras hath said so; yet thus much I presume to Answer, that Diocesan Bishops are filled with the Holy Ghost, as well as parochial Pastors, and that Schismatics have no Title to it.

We come now to his Third Reason of Non-Conformity, the Declaration of Assent and Consent, required in the Act of Uniformity, to the Book of Common Prayer. And I Recant Assent to that passage

Just Dilect.

Manil.

Aug. 7.

* Ibid. p.

140.

* By Peter du Moulin, Bcz. Chamier Nic. vedetius, whom he cites as Confessing it.

The Judge-ment of Foreign Reformed Churches, p. 32, 33.

in the *Athanasian Creed*, where it is said, *then every one that doth not keep that Faith, shall without doubt perish Everlastingly.* Now it is certain, the *Athanasian Creed* is entirely received, and approved by all the Protestant Churches in the World, (excepting only the *Unitarians*) as hath been lately observed; and therefore this Minister is herein a Non-Conformist to all Protestant Churches, as well as to the Church of England; and they are all Condemned together as practising a point of *Popery*, in damning all that differ from them. Let us see now the Reason upon which all Protestant Churches are condemned by him. One Article (says he) of that Creed is about the Procession of the Holy Ghost, from the Father and the Son, which the *Greek Churches* did not believe nor receive; and supposing them in an Error, he adds, I must be very bold if I leap into the Throne of Judgment, and pronounce them damned. I am as much afraid as he is, of invading Christ's Tribunal, and pronouncing any one damned, much more a whole Church, and such a Church as comprehends so many Millions of Christians.

But, 1. The Differences between the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, about the Article of Procession, is by *Learned men* affirmed, to be only verbal, because the *Greeks* acknowledged, under another Scripture Expression in the same thing, which the *Latines* understand by Procession, viz. that the Spirit is of, or from the Son, as he is of and from the Father; That as the Son is God of God, by being of the Father, so the Holy Ghost is God of God, by being of the Father and the Son, as receiving that infinite and eternal Essence from them both. Thus Bishop *Pearson* upon the Article, and if so it be, then there is no difference about the Doctrine it self, but only about the word Procession. But says this Minister, The Procession of the Holy Ghost is a most profound Mystery, and very much obscured by bringing in the word Procession; and is not this a most profound Objection? Is it not rather profound Non Sense, to say, that the Procession is obscured by the word Procession? And how does the expressing that Mystery by Procession any more obscure it, than the infinite Duration of God is obscured by calling it Eternity? But, the Scripture on that occasion never uses the word. In relation to the Father, it is used expressly, and in Relation to the Son, it is contained virtually in Scripture, where the Holy Ghost is often said to be the Spirit of the Son, and that is all which is understood by proceeding from him: and if no words are to be admitted, that are not found in Scripture, (the old Subterfuge of the *Arians*) we must not only

*Mr. Field of the Church, lib. 2. c. 1. Loads Conf. p. 16. Pearson on the Creed, p. 324.

the

*John 15, 26.

only exterminate *Humanism, Procession, and eternal Generation*, but we must burn all our Bibles, except the Greek and Hebrew, because they are not properly the Word of God, but Words that signify by the Agreement of Men; and if the original Words of Scripture may be Translated by Words of humane Institution, why may not a Doctrine of Scripture be so exprest, also.

Secondly, as many of the *Roman Church* have absolved the *Greeks* from damnable Error in this Point, so it is notorious, that the Writers of our Church have always vindicated them from it; and therefore it cannot be imagined, that our Church in this *Creed* should pronounce them damn'd; and it must be manifest injustice to put such Interpretations upon the *Credo* of a Church, as have been ever disclaimed by the chiefest Writers of it.

Thirdly, These damnatory Clauses must be understood to refer only to the Belief of the Doctrines contained in the *Creed*, and not to every particular Word and Expression in it. The great Fundamental Doctrine, which in this *Creed* is called the *Catholic Faith*, is this, *That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity*, and of this Faith it is declared, That they who keep it not, shall perish everlastingly. And they who believe this, viz. *That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are Three Persons and one God*, do believe all that follows in the *Creed*, which contains nothing, but what is Essential to the Unity and Distinction of the Three Persons, and therefore however, they who believe the *Trinity*, may scruple some Words and Expressions in this *Creed*, or understand nothing of them; yet as long as they believe the Doctrines, they are not included in the Sentence of *perishing everlastingly*. Faith belongs not unto Words but Things, and though no one shall be damn'd for a Word, yet it is no uncharitableness to say after our Saviour, that he, who believeth not, shall be damn'd; neither is it any *Popery* to conclude, that if the Belief of the *Trinity* be necessary to Baptism, it is necessary to Salvation; and if this Minister be of another mind, let him answer the Arguments that have been lately urged for the necessity of that Belief; and let him also satisfy the World, if he can, why the *Athanasian Creed*, which the Presbyterians appointed to be read in Churches, in their Directory drawn up at the Savoy, an. 1661, should be afterwards a Reason of their Nonconformity.

But he goes on with his Scruples about the Matter of Consent, and declines to speak of the *Circumciser, the Cross, the Surplice*, and behold the Reason, because *it now they came from Rome, and*

* Dr. Stier.
Vindication
of the
Doctrine
of the
Trinity.

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when Rome falls, they will fall too. This is an Art full of Venome to traduce by odious Insinuations, that which cannot be opposed by just Objections. It appears from * *Origen* and others, that the *Cross in Baptism*, and from † *S. Chrysostome*, and *S. Jerome*, that such a Garment as the *Surplice*, were of Ancient Usage; their Antiquity is far enough beyond *Popery*, and they come no more from *Rome*, than do our *Creeeds* and our *Bibles*; and if this Minister hath had a Revelation in his *Patmos*, that they shall fall with *Rome*, we are foretold, that in the last Times false Prophets shall arise, and must not take his Dream for Vision. Next, *en passant*, he upbraids us with our praying for King *James*, a profest Papist, that he might persevere in the Faith, but there is no such Prayer in our Liturgy; and if there were, seeing the Papists are Christians, and believe all that is necessary to Salvation, (for I hope, he will not leap into the Throne of Judgement, and pronounce them damn'd.) why may we not pray for their Perseverance in the Faith, not the Faith of a Papist, but the Faith of a Christian, that will suffice to save them. And now, after these little Skirmishes, we enter into the Battel, and must encounter the Reasons which he has mustered up against reading the imposed Form of Common Prayer. And here pray judge between the Church of England and the Nonconformists.

First, he affirms, that during the Apostles Times, and two or three Hundred Years after, there was no Liturgy used nor imposed, neither did they direct for the drawing up of any, and enforcing it by Penal Laws. Here are many things jumbled together, which must be separated, Penal Laws; imposing set Forms; Directions for them by the Apostles; and the Primitive use of them. As for Penal Laws, the Presbyterians themselves allow them, and their Directory is as accountable for them as our Liturgy; imposing to be considered hereafter; and as to Directions for composing Forms, out of many that are urged, I shall select these three Considerations.

1. Seeing there is convincing * Evidence, that the Jewish Church had a fixed Liturgy, and therefore both our Saviour, and his Apostles, who frequented their Synagogues, did certainly joyn in it, and not one *Nota* is to be found in the Gospel that condemns it; from this Silence, and that Practice, we may certainly conclude, that the use of fixed Liturgies is lawful; that the joyning in them is warranted by their Example; and that separation from a Church upon that account is absolutely unlawful.

* Orig. in
Pl. 38.
Hom. 2.

† See Hoo-
ker, lib. 5.
sect. 29.

* See Dr.
Flam-
mond's
View of
the Dire-
ctory; Sel-
den on Eu-
stichyus, p.
33. Dr.
Lightfoot,
Vol. 2. p. 158.
and Dr. Combes's Scholastical History, p. 2. the Examiner of Dr. Combes's
p. 4. does question the Solidity of their Proofs, but yet declines to undertake them.

2. Our Saviour himself composed a Form of Prayer, for his Disciples, and in so doing hath * commended a set Form of Prayer unto His Church; He enjoyn'd them, when they prayed, to say, *Our Father*, &c. which is as plain a Prescription of a Form as any Words can express. It is † confessed that this Form was anciently used in the Church, and this Primitive Use may be very reasonably ascribed to that Prescription, especially when we have so plain a Testimony as that of * *Tertullian*, *Novi Discipulis Christus novam Orandi Formam determinavit*; i. e. *Christ* hath prescribed a new Form of Prayer to his new Disciples: And therefore from the Institution, nay from the Use of that Prayer, which is confessedly ancient, we may certainly conclude, that a Form of Prayer is lawful in itself, that it is useful and edifying; that a Prayer is not therefore unlawful or inexpedient because it is a Form; and that the Prescription, or Use of a Form in a Church, will not justify separation from it.

* See *Ad. Made on Matt. 6. 9.*

† *Clarkson's Disc. conc. Liturgica. p. 3.*

* *Tert. de Orat. ca. 1.*

3. All the Directions which our Saviour or His Apostles have given for the Performance of the Duty of Prayer, may be apply'd to Forms of Prayer; suppose a Prayer to be exactly composed according to those Directions, may not such a Prayer be frequently used? Does it cease to be made according to those Directions if it becomes a Form? Is a good Prayer spoyled by using it often? And can the same Prayer be agreeable and not agreeable to Scripture, though it is not altered? The Spirit has given Directions for Prayer, and those are equally applicable to Prayers composed by private Men; and to those that are made for the use of a Church by the Governors of it; he hath given no Direction that private or extemporane Prayer should be only used in the Church. The Rules are general, and if the Apostles have not directed the drawing up Forms, they have left no Directions for any Prayer at all, seeing every Prayer either is, or may be a Form.

Lastly, As to the Use of Liturgies in the first Ages of the Church, he affirms, *That it hath been abundantly cleared by those that have laboured in this Controversie, that the Pastors of Churches in the Primitive Times did not read Prayers*. Those Labourers he refers to, are only Mr. *Clarkson*, for out of his *Discourse of Liturgies* he has extracted his Objections, and they are all answered already in *Dr. Comber's Scholastical History*; but because he has rallied up some few of them to defend his Nonconformity, it is necessary to oppose the same Answers to them. He says, it is abundantly cleared, that the Primitive Pastors did not read Prayers. Mr. *Clarkson* indeed

answered *Dr. Comber's* History, but he says I shall not now do so.

Dr.
Comber's
Schof. Hist.
pt. 2d. p.
206, &c.

affirms, that no such Phrase is to be found in any *Prayer* of the Four of five first Ages at least. And to this it is replied, that no such Phrase as *extempore Prayer*, nor any thing Equivalent can be produced in that time; that if written Forms of Prayer be clearly proved in those Ages, such positive Evidence cannot be overthrown by a negative Argument, and the want of a Phrase will not prove that any thing that was, not which is proved to have been: That Mr. *Clarkson* himself hath found written Formanich in that time, and that it is certain, that the *Jews* had written Forms, and yet the reading them is is no where mentioned in Scripture. The Minister proceeds and urges, that *vid. sc. 3. the Prayer for Peter's Enlargement* was *instant*, *fervent* without ceasing, but not by any Form, as is agreed on all sides: as if Prayer by a Form could not be instant and fervent; but the ancient Church were of another opinion, when the *Litany* was commonly expressed by *tearful* *ardour*, that is, earnest or fervent Supplications. However, tho it be granted, that no Form was used on such an extraordinary occasion, does it follow, that none was therefore used in the ordinary Prayers of the Church? Or suppose that no Forms were used when the Church had the extraordinary Assistance of the Holy Ghost to direct their Prayer, does it follow, that no Forms are to be used, when that Assistance is long since ceased? if it does, then it follows also, that studying Languages is now unlawful, because the Apostles were taught them by Inspiration, and that no Preacher ought to premeditate or write his Sermons, because we never read that the Apostles did so.

See Dr.
Comber on
the Lita-
ny.

But the next Objection he thinks to be demonstrative, *scilicet* says he, have been so curious as to observe, that in the Primitive times, the Saints usually prayed with their Eyes fixed on the Mercy Seat, or closed, which utterly disables Persons from reading Prayers. Mr. *Macle* has proved, that the *Jews* worshiped towards the Ark (whose cover was the Mercy Seat) and that the ancient Christians worshiped towards the Holy Table or *Altar*, which Answers to the Mercy Seat in the Jewish Temple; but whether their Eyes were fixed or closed is a moot Point to me, and I have not the Curiosity to make a research in to it. Mr. *Clarkson* Labours to prove, that they lift up their Eyes towards Heaven; but however, they disposed of their Eyes, I hope the officiating Minister might nevertheless read Prayers to them. In our own Assemblies some devout Persons may be seen with their Eyes closed, others looking towards

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On Psal.
m. 2. 7.

the *Apostles*, and others towards Heaven, and even the *Minister* himself does often lift up his Eyes in Prayer; but I hope all this is no Argument that we have no Liturgy in our Church, and that they who scruple its use, do scruple nothing, and if it is no Argument now, it never was one.

2. We come next to his Second Class of Reasons, which he thus begins, *The Pastors of Churches in the Primitive times, were under the teaching of the Anointing, and had the Spirit and Gift of Prayer.* Suppose we this to be true, that they were taught to pray by the Unction of the Spirit; was this Unction extraordinary, as the Gifts of Languages, Prophecy and Miracles? or was it an ordinary standing Gift, which was to continue in the Church unto the end of the World? If he means the former, to what purpose does he urge a Gift which no one now can justly pretend to? if the latter, why did he not explain the Nature of it, and shew the Promise, the extent and the necessity of it, and withal answer the Arguments, that have been urg'd against these Pretences.

* Dr. Falk-
ners Liber-
tus Eccles.

his Vindication of Liturgies, and the Cases Cons. the Lawfulness of joining with Forms of Prayer, part. 1.

But whatever he means by this Gift of Prayer, he would prove the use of it from *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian* the * *son of the* * *Justus*
in the former, he says, *is Vindicated beyond all Exception.* The *Apol. 2.*
Objectors understand by that Phrase, that the chief Minister used *p. 98.*
his own Abilities in composing a Prayer. But * others think that * *Libertas*
it signifies his praying with all his might, i. e. with the utmost *Eccles. p.*
intention and fervency of Spirit. They explain this Phrase by *113. Sc.*
another of the same Author used a little before it, where he says, *Schol.*
that *they made their common Prayers to God iuvibus*, i. e. fervently *Hist. p. 33.*
and importunately. They further prove, that the same Ex- *& part. 1.*
pression in another place of *Justin* (where he represents the Chri-
istians in general, as praising God with Prayers and Thanksgivings,
son of the) must signify only fervency of Devotion, since it cannot
be pretended that every Christian in the Congregation pray-
ed publicly by his own Ability and Composure; and lastly
they shew, that this Phrase is by the antient Writers applied to
singing of Hymns which were set Forms of Prayers and Praises,
and not Composed at every meeting by the Minister; and these
are plain Demonstrations, that this Expression is no Proof of any
Gift in praying, since it often signifies only fervency in it. The

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* *Examiner*

* P. 24.

* *Examiner* of Dr. Comber labours much to vindicate this Phrase, and he cannot deny, that it sometimes signifies only fervency of Spirit when it is apply'd to the People, but he thinks it a very plain Case, that a Minister cannot properly be said to pray to the utmost of his Ability, when he doth not pray to the utmost of his Ability; and may not the same thing be said of the People also? If the Minister use a Form, may he not likewise pray with all his might, or as well as he is able? and is not this a plain Equivoacting upon the word *Ability*? take it first for fervency, and then for a faculty of composing, and the Contradiction is solved, and the Fallacy Transparent.

* Tert.
Apol.
cap. J.

The other Proof is out of * *Tertullian sine Monitor quia de pectore oramus*, we pray without a Monitor, because we pray out of the Heart. But this can be no Proof against a Form of Prayer; for 1. They who joyn with a Minister that prays *Ex tempore*, do pray as much with a Monitor, and have a Prayer dictated to them as much, as if they joyned in a prescribed Liturgy. And 2. Praying out of the Heart, may signifie either saying a Prayer by Heart; or secret mental Prayer without words; or praying heartily, sincerely and affectionately, *de anima innocenti, de Spiritu Sancto*, (as *Tertullian* a little after) with a prayer proceeding from an innocent Soul, and the Holy Spirit moving and exciting it. These interpretations are probable and consistent with the use of Liturgies, and consequently from this passage no Argument can be drawn against them: Yet from thence this Minister takes occasion to vent his Malice against Liturgies, and to reproach them, as an *heathenish way of Praying*. Now if our Saviour prescribed a Form to his Disciples, (and it is impossible for him to prove the contrary) then this reproach is Blasphemy; might not an *Atheist* say as well, That Prayer it self is an *Heathenish practice*,

Schol.
Hist. part.
1. p. 46.
C6.

* Comment.
in Enchyri-
um, p. 55.
* View of
the Direc-
tory,

or a *Quietest*, that vocal Prayer is a *Heathenish way of praying*. Mr. * *Selden* thought it probable that the Heathens learnt to use set Forms from the Example of the Jewish Church, and he cites Authorities to prove it, and * *Dr. Hammond* produces out of *Plato* and *Alexander, ab Alex.* these two Reasons of that practice, which he thinks may pass Christian, *least evil things should be asked instead of good, and least any thing should be said Prophanously in their Prayers*; and therefore the practice of the Heathens is so far from being a prejudice to Liturgies, that it is a solid Argument for them. Whether either, or both, the Example of Gods Church, or the Catholick reason of mankind were the Original of it, the

universal

universal use of them among *Jews* and *Christians*, and *Heathens*; is an impregnable Proof of their expediency, and can be ascribed to no other cause, but the voice of God or Nature.

3. He transcribes this Objection after *Mr. Clarkson*, when the *Christians* were so numerous in *Constantinople*, that it was thought necessary to dispose of them in several Churches, the Emperor *Constantine* * ~~sent~~ to *Eusebius* for 50 Bibles, for the use of those Churches, but there is no mention of any one common Prayer Book. *Eusebius* commends *Constantine* for observing in his Court the manner of the publick Service in the Church, he first imployed his mind in the Meditation of the Scriptures, and then with those who dwelt in his Palace he repeated, * *ὡς οἱ ἐκκλησίαι*, the authorized Prayers; and it is known, that he himself composed a Prayer which he * prescribed to his Army. And after such convincing, Proofs can a Negative Argument be thought considerable enough to Ballance them. Is it imaginable that *Eusebius* intended to give an exact Inventory of all that was provided for those Churches? *Constantine* sends to *Eusebius* in *Palastine* for 50 Bibles, probably because the best Copies might be there most easily procured; does it therefore follow, that no prayer Books were provided at *Constantinople*, where it was easie to procure them? and if we should send to *Holland* for Bibles when we want them, would it not be as plain a Demonstration, that we have no prayer Books in *England*? * He pretends, That when Forms of Prayer began to be used, every Church made use of what Forms they pleased, and for this he cites *Socrates Scholast. lib. 3.* the passage he intends is in *Chap. 22.* In which the Historian reflecting upon a division among the *Novatians* about the time of keeping *Easter*, and shewing that antiently in different Churches, it was observed at different times without breach of Communion, does pass from thence to observe the diversity of other different usages in the *Christian Churches*, as the different Customs of keeping the Fasts before *Easter*, the Marriages of the Clergy, and the different Rites and times of Prayer, and interpreting Scripture in many Provinces and Countreys. Then he tells us, that the *Novatians* in the *Hellspont*, did not observe the same manner of praying with those of *Constantinople*, and concludes, that upon the whole every where, and in all the Worshipps (or Rites) of Prayers, you cannot find, that they agree together, two in the same thing; and this is the passage they insist on. But, 1. *ὡς οἱ ἐκκλησίαι* *ἢ ὡς οἱ*, may signifie Ceremonies and Rites of Prayer, for of different Ceremonies he was before Discoursing, and then

* Euseb.
de vita
Const. lib.
4. c. 35.

* Ibid cap.
17.

* Ibid cap.
19, 20.

* See
Schol. Hist.
part. 2d.
p. 48. &c.

the Passage will be no proof of different Forms. 2. Admitting that he speaks of different Prayers, this diversity is not spoken of single Congregations, but of several Nations and Dioceses, such as, for instance, *Jerusalem, Cyprus, Constantinople*. 3. A little after we have the reason of this variety, I judge, says *Socrates*, that the Bishops, who presided in several Ages, were the cause of it; and how? They transmitted their own Usage as a Law to those who should come after them; thus the cause of this diversity was not Liberty, but Law and Prescription. 4. Immediately after, he vindicates the *Nicene Council*, which had determined the Controversie about *Easter*, and prescribed a certain time to keep it. But diversity in praying, and the different times of *Easter*, are by this *Historian* proposed as things alike indifferent; and if Church Authority may determine and prescribe in one case, so it may also in the other. Thus we have the great Example of the *Nicene Fathers* for prescribing, and in stead of the *Liberty* they pretend to, the *Prescription* of set Forms, or Rights of Prayer to whole Dioceses and Nations. In short, the design of the *Historian* is to shew, that there were divers Customs in the Church in Things indifferent, and that the Communion of the Church ought not to be divided for them: Now Custom is a Law, introduced by Practice; and Law is a restraint upon Liberty: And if indifferent things may be prescribed by Custom, they may be prescribed by Canons, and Separation for them is alike unlawful.

He observes further, that there were several Liturgies allowed even in the Roman Communion, and that this Branch of the Churches Liberty was taken away by the Council of Trent, and here in England by the Reformation. And what was that Liberty which was thus abridged? Not an Arbitrary Liberty in every Pastor of a Parish to use what Form he pleased, but the use of different Rules of Prayer that were before prescribed and practised in different National Churches and Dioceses. The different Offices in England, as those for instance after the use of *Sarum* and *York*, did agree in Substance, they had the same Forms of Prayer, and differed for the most part in Rubricks and Ritualities only; and when our first Reformers established an uniform Order, it was not esteemed an Encroachment upon Christian Liberty; neither are Unity, Order and Uniformity, the less valuable because Councils and Popes were for them.

5. His next Reason is an *Inveline* against the Introducers of Liturgies, and in the midst of it he defines *ex Cathedra*, That the Liturgies which bear the great Names of *S. James, Peter, Mark, Basil*.

Basil and Chrysostome are known Forgeries. That they are not really genuine as they are now extant, is affirmed by no one; but that they are Forgeries quite throughout, and especially the Liturgy ascribed to St. James, is so far from being known; that we may safely affirm, that ~~it~~ it is impossible to know it. And the contrary opinion of so Learned men, as * *Baronius, Deurantius, Leo, Allatus, Sixtus Senensis, Possennius, Pamelinus*, and others among the Romanists; Dr. *Hammond, Thorndike, Falkner, Cosanbon, Salmasius, Durel*, and some other Protestants will bear me out in affirming it.

* See Falkners Vindication, p. 149.

But behold the Modesty, Charity and Humility of this Minister: *It was the Ignorance, Carnality, Sloth and Laziness of the Clergy, together with their Pride which first brought in and imposed Service-Books on the Churches.* When the Church began to be an Harlot, when Bishops were not Silver Trumpets, but tinkling Cymbals, &c. when in Councils, as of Ephesus and Chalcedon, they profest they did *litteras ignorare*, and could not write their own Names to confirm their Conque, then came in our Liturgies. Thus far the Son of Thunder, but I take heart again, for I find it is *brutum fulmen*, and our Prayer-Books are in no danger from it. The Falshood and weakness of this Rallery is * sufficiently exposed already, and it is impossible such stuff should impose upon any, but the greatest Bigots of Fanaticism, Ignorance, Carnality, Pride and Laziness brought in Liturgies; he might as well have said, that *Burglary or Usury* did introduce them; if Pride and Ignorance brought in Liturgies, why are they not read in *Conventicles*? for * Mr. Baxter hath complained to all the World, that the People who frequent them, for their Ignorance, Injudiciousness, Pride and Self-conceitedness are their Grief and their Shame, and certainly we may believe him. But if Pride and Ignorance brought in Liturgies, we remember well when *Embulasim, Sacrilege and Rebellion* did eject them. We have * had convincing Proofs, that the Jesuits first brought *contempore* Prayers into England; those Missionaries of *Antichristianism* were the first Teachers of them; and when Presbyterian Ministers were Trumpets to Rebellion, when their Sermons and their Arms brought the best of Kings to the Scaffold, when the Church was rent in pieces with damnable Doctrines, when *Jeroboam's Priests* profaned the Pulpits and the Altars, when the Stalls and the Shambles were the chief Schools of the Prophets, when all Religion was vanished into Cant; and Blasphemy and Nonsense were entitled to the Holy Spirit; then were *Liturgies*

* Schol Hist. part 2d. p. 276.

* In his Cure of Divisions.

* Preface to Dr. Still Unreasonable ableness of Separation.

first

first abolished, and *extempore Prayers* first universally practised in any Christian Nation in the World.

But *Liturgies*, he says, were brought in when the Church began to be an Harlot. *Smellymnus* * derived their pedigree from Three Canons of the *Laodicæan*, *Carthaginian*, and *Ashlethan* Councils; and thus they are allowed to be in use about 1300 years since, and has the Church been a *Whore* for so many Ages? has she forsaken her *Spouse* so long? has she renounced *Christ Jesus* for 13 Centuries together? Yes, and much longer too, when we dispute about *Episcopacy*; for when we come to that Controversie, the Mystery of Iniquity was working even in the times of the *Apostles*; and the Church did then begin to be an Harlot also; so little do some men care how they wound our common Christianity, and condemn the whole *Catholic Church* of *Christ*, so they may but vent their Malice against *Liturgies* and *Bishops*. But because he cannot deny that *Liturgies* were introduced in the 4th and 5th Centuries, he particularly Rallies upon the Ignorance of the Bishops of those Ages. And were those ever reputed ignorant Ages? when was the Church better enlightened with Learning, than when *Chrysostome*, *Basil*, *Nysse*, *Nabianben*, *Epiphanius*, the two *Cyrills*, *Lactantius*, *Ambrose*, *Jerome*, *Augustine*, *Isidore Pelus*, *Theodore*, *Vincentius*, *Gennadius*, and many others were the Luminaries of it. But among these *Gnosticks*, even the *Mechanicks*, and the Women have been thought more able *Divines* than the *Fathers*; and indeed if Ability is to be measured by the Gift of *Prayer*, as they call it, they may vye Learning even with their own Teachers; for their most ignorant Zealots do often pray with as much fluency of words, with as much pretence to the Spirit, (and which is the main Gift) with as much Confidence, as the ablest *Ministers* among them. But the Bishops of *Ephesus* and *Chalcedon* could not write their Names, and Mr. *Clarkson* indeed produces the *Subscriptions* of Three or four to prove it. And to * this it is replied, That those *Subscriptions* are of no credit as being suspected of Forgery; but suppose there were four Bishops among 330 in those Councils, who were so illiterate, is it not a very impudent Calumny to say indefinitely, as he does, That the Bishops of *Ephesus* and *Chalcedon* could not write their Names to confirm their Canons? might it not as well be said, that the Assembly of *Divines* at *Westminster* were *Independants*, because there were Five of that *Set* among them, or that the *Nonconformists Ministers* of this Age, have generally died as *Traitors*, be-
cause

Answer to
Remont.

p. 7.

Schol.
Hist. pt. 2.
p. 300.

cause Two or three were executed for being in *Minworths* Rebellion.

His last Reason concerns the imposing of Liturgies; and here he denies not the Lawfulness of them, but after he has begged the belief of his Followers, *That they were not used in the Primitive times for many Hundred of years*, he pretends to prove the unlawfulness of imposing them. Now one would think it a plain Case, *that things lawful in themselves may be lawfully enjoyed by lawful Authority*; but this Minister is of another opinion, and the only Reason he gives for the unlawfulness of prescribing Forms is this, *That it is a restraint upon the Gifts of such Ministers, as have Ability to compose better Prayers themselves*; and this he illustrates by the spiteful charges of *Trespass Offerings*, and of a *Law obliging those, who are not Liable and Impotent to make use of Crutches*. But, 1st. All this is impertinent to the Dispute before us; for the Ministers in our Church are not restrained from the Exercise of their own Abilities in publick Prayers; they may use their own conceived Prayers in the Pulpit, and the *Fifty fifth Canon*, as explained by the general Practice, is an allowance of it, and therefore if the Exercise of Abilities be not excluded in our Church, the pretence of restraint can never justify a Separation from it.

Secondly, The Objection is grounded on these false *Suppositions*; that God is better served by conceived Prayers, than by a publick Liturgy; that the Church is less edified by it; that it is unlawful to lay a restraint upon private Gifts; and that it is lawfull to separate for better Edification; and unless all these *Propositions* here precariously supposed to be true, (and I think he will find it impossible to prove them) then his whole reasoning, and the *Crutches* he has brought to prop it, and the *Pidgeons, Lambs and Bullocks* which attend it, are plainly unserviceable to him. His *Pidgeons and Gentles* are designed to intimate that a *Form* of Prayer is a cheap, impotent, unedifying way of Worship, in Comparison of their *extraneous Effusions*; but this he should have proved; for he knows we assert the contrary; we think that Prayers are not more acceptable, because they are *inconsiderate* or of private Composure; that the Framers of our Liturgy were as well gifted as *Dissenters*; that the Church may be better edified by the Spirit of the Church, than by the Spirit of a *Member*; and that those Prayers are fittest for the People, which they are before acquainted with, and wherein they are secured from Presumption and Impertinence, Blasphemy and Nonsense.

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Epist. 87.
ad Prot.
Aug.

He should have proved likewise, that the Exercise of private Gifts cannot lawfully be restrained by publick Authority; we know, that even the miraculous Gifts of the Spirit were subject to restraint, and we have an express Rule, *That the Spirit of the Prophets must be subject to the Prophets*: There is no Law, no Reason, nor Revelation against such a restraint; on the contrary both Reason and Religion do require, that the use of private Abilities be regulated by publick Order; and that the vain Ostentation of them be restrained. *Calvin has expressly declared for the necessity of prescribing Forms, *To remedy the simplicity and unskilfulness of some, to testify the Consent of all the Churches in the same Prayers, and to prevent the desultory Lightness of those, who affect Novelty*; In short, all the Foreign reformed Churches, do either use or approve of prescribed Liturgies; the old Nonconformists always allowed them, and even the Presbyterian Directory prescribed every thing but Words; and if private Spirits may be restrained to Sense and Matter, why not to Form and Language also?

See Unreasonableness
of Separation pt. 1.

Lastly, Admitting that such restraint is unlawful; and that conceived Prayers are more edifying than Forms, he should then have proved, that it is lawful to separate for *better Edification*. The antient Puritans thought otherwise, and so did the Presbyterian Assembly in their Controversie with the Independents, and so both Reason, Experience, and Revelation do convince us, that the restraint of private Gifts will not justify the dividing of Christ; that the silencing an able Minister is not so mischievous as Schism; that the Pretences of better Edification is the fruitful Parent of endless Separations; and that the Church (which is in the House of the living God) cannot be built or edified, by being torn in pieces and destroyed? Thus have I considered at large his Discourse about Liturgies, it is the principal Fort and Bulwark of his Cause, and the slight defences which remain will be easily demolished.

4. The Point that follows next, is the abjuring of the solemn League and Covenant, as in it self an unlawful Oath, and imposed on the Subjects of the Realm, against the known Laws and Liberties of this Kingdom. And is it not extremely modest in these Men, to Quarrel at the State, for requiring them to renounce an Impious and Rebellious Covenant? was it reasonable to admit such men into the Offices of the Church, as were sworn and obstinately resolved to extirpate the whole Government of it? But let us consider the Reasons which he urges against the abjuring that Covenant.

1. There

These are the Learned Preachers who in this Day Risk the
 Reputation of being Church-Parties, Brethren, Ministers, Good, Common
 Law, and Reason-Teachers: is it reasonable that as being such, they should
 be considered as Teachers of Ignorance, Law, and Liberties, which they are
 not, and are maintained by them? Indeed that is so necessary that a good
 Preacher should be a good Lawyer; and much less is it necessary
 to read over a Lawyers Library, to be convinced, that the Cove-
 nant was illegal; can none but profound Lawyers know that the
 Oath and Subscription are against our Laws and Liberties? Does not
 every sensible man know, that the imposition of an Oath with-
 out Law is manifestly, in contrary to it? and that nothing is
 Law, which has not the concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons?
 In proof of it? have these Ministers never heard of the *Principles of*
Right, which declare all others without Law, to be against our
 Laws and Liberties? Or can they tell us by what Law the Cove-
 nant was established? or was it not imposed without the Con-
 currence of the King, and against his express Command? Had they
 never heard of the Oath and Laws about the Kings Supremacy?
 and is not the *Covenant* plainly contradictory to it? and lastly,
 do they not know that this *Abjuration* is required by an *Act of Par-*
liament? and what need then of consulting Law Books about a
Covenant, for which there is no *Provision* in them; when the *Legis-*
lative Power it self has declared the unlawfulness of it? Is it
 possible this Ignorance is affected; time was, when they were so well
 acquainted with Law and Liberties, that they preached the Peo-
 ple into a Rebellion for them; in the Covenant it self they swore
 expressly to preserve the *Privileges of Parliament*, and the
Liberties of the Kingdom; if then they knew those *Liberties*, can
 they now be unconscious with them? or is it not as lawful to
 abjure, as to swear, without knowledge? An Article. They swore
 to preserve the Religion of the Church of Scotland in Doctrine, Wor-
 ship, Discipline and Government; and was there one in a Thousand
 of the Covenanters that had a competent knowledge of these par-
 ticulars? How could it be imagined, that the common People
 should know them? and yet they never scrupled to exhort them
 to take it, tho they were morally certain, they did not understand
 it. And lastly, why is not this Objection considered by the
 Virgin Daughter of Scotland, who phrases it? There they force the
 Clergy to swear that *M. and M.* are lawful King and Queen by
 Laws of that Kingdom, and in this reasonable, when they are ut-
 terly unacquainted with those Laws, and many Learned Preachers

* 3 Car. 1.
 c. 1. S. 2.

* Vid. Ju-
 dicium A-
 cad Ox-
 nienfide
 forum
 Feder. p.
 8. 14.

* Artic. 3.

have never read the *Gloss* nor *Summe*, *Law*, nor *Crus*, nor *Sighe*, nor the *Original Contract*; but it is always to be observed, that the *Presbyterians* never do condemn what they do not practice.

2. The Substance of his next Reason is this, *This the Covenant was taken by the People of Two or three Kingdoms; and a man had need be a good Casuist, that can declare understandingly, that no one man is bound by that Oath, which almost every man took.* Now I believe this *Covenant* was not taken by the Majority of these Kingdoms; in *England* I am sure it was generally refused by the Clergy, the Universities and the greatest part of the Nobility and Gentry. But admit the Majority took it, the force of his Reason depends upon this Proposition, *That an Oath takes by a vast multitude must needs be Obligatory*; and is it necessary to read all the *Catholic Books of Divinity* to confute so manifest a Falshood? In *Papish* Countries many Millions do take *Monastick Vows*, and all the Clergy swear obedience to the *Pope*; and may not an ordinary Casuist declare understandingly, that none of them are bound by those Vows and Oaths which all of them have taken? The *Wily*, *League in France* was sworn by more than the *Solemn League in England*, was it therefore Obligatory? and is it not a sufficient Humiliation to which this Minister has called me, to be bound to answer such Absurdities.

3. He urges, that by the *Covenant* all Persons were bound in their places to endeavour a Reformation of the Church according to the Scriptures, and the Examples of the best reformed Churches; and he asks, is this an unlawful Oath? I answer, the Question is deceitful; a man binds himself by Oath to serve God and the Devil, and he asks, is it not lawful to serve God? is this an unlawful Oath? Thus the *Covenanters* did swear to endeavour Reformation, Art. 1. and to extirpate *Episcopacy*, Art. 2. But this Minister mentions Reformation only, and then impertinently demands, is this Oath unlawful? I am ready to maintain against him, that an Oath to serve the Devil is not more unlawful, than an Oath to destroy *Episcopacy*; and that upon this ground, because it is of *Apollitical Institution*. There are many other things unlawful in that *Covenant*, (as any one may be satisfied by the unanswerable Reasons of the University of *Oxford* against it) and therefore if this Minister will prove it lawful, let him justify it throughout, and not fly to such Methods, as may serve to justify the most execrable Oaths that can be, by producing one single Passage, that may seem justifiable in them. But thus he proceeds, *If a man should swear, that he is a Pious*

and?

and Calling he would endeavour to cast every Idol out of the World; and what is the consequence of this terrible If? Why, truly nothing at all; but he silly adds, that in Scotland they have cast off Prelacy, and established Presbytery, i. e. they have cast out the Idol, and set up the true God among them; but if this be his meaning, that Episcopacy is Idolatry, I account of him as one of the incurable Fanatical Rant, that call every thing Idol or *idol* but that displeases them, and I am not obliged to answer Bigotry and Frenzy.

The last Point he insists on, is a Passage out of the Communion Office in the Liturgy, wherein the Church declares her Desire, that the Godly Discipline, used in the Primitive Church, may be again restored; and says, *it is much to be wished for*. It is wonderful to consider, what work he makes with this Passage! but I am willing to believe he never read it in the Liturgy. It was long since an old conceit of the Nonconformists, * that the Primitive Discipline, which was so much wished for by the Compilers of our Liturgy, was the Presbyterian Discipline, and from them, I presume, he borrowed the Objection. But in the Liturgy it self there is no Foundation for it, as will appear from a view of the Passage it self in the Preface to the Communion, *Brethren, in the Primitive Church, there was a Godly Discipline, that at the beginning of Lent, such Persons as stood convicted of Mortal Sins, were put to open Penance, and punished in this World*—*In stead whereof, (omit the said Discipline may be restored again, which is much to be wished for,)* *it is thought good, &c.* and is Presbytery the Discipline here desired? undoubtedly as much as Popery or Mahometanism; Is not that Discipline expressly declared to be the Discipline of publick Penance, which in the ancient Church was inflicted upon such as stood convicted of Notorious Sins at the beginning of Lent, in order to their Absolution, and Admission to the Holy Sacrament at Easter? What can be more express and evident, than that the Ancient Lent Discipline is there alone intended? And have the Nonconformists, as he pretends, ever written for, preached for, and suffered for, the Restoration of this Discipline? Have they ever wish'd or desired it? Have they not always written and preach'd against it? Do they not still exclaim at it, as Popery and Superstition? But this Minister pronounces confidently, that this Expression stands in the Liturgy, as well for the Justification of the Nonconformists, as for a Testimony against the Prelates. Thus the Godly Discipline is a Condemnation to them who have always desired it, and Justification to them who have always opposed it; and if Nonconformists must

* Vid.
Hooker,
p. 334.

needs be justified by Blunder and Contradiction, this Minister confesses is a St. Apologist for them. But behold the Reasoning he makes on this Passage.

First, *The Reformers and Compilers of our Book of Common Prayer had no full Satisfaction with what was then done.* What, Were they not fully satisfied with the Liturgy? The first Liturgy of *Edward* the 6th was applauded by the whole * Parliament, & compiled by the *Special Aid of the Holy Ghost*; and * *Doctor Taylor* the Martyr publicly declared, that the whole Church Service in *King Edward's* Second Liturgy, was so fully perfected according to the Rules of our Christian Religion, that no Christian Conscience could be offended with any thing therein contained. The Papists were the only Persons in those Times, that were dissatisfied with it, and therefore, in *Queen Mary's* days, a Challenge was made by * *Crommer*, that with *R. Martyr*, and four or five more, they would enter the Lists with any Papists living, and defend the Common Prayer Book to be perfectly agreeable to the Word of God, and the same, in effect, which had been for 1500 Years in the Church of Christ; and let any one now consider, whether our first Reformers were not fully satisfied with the Liturgy. But he adds, they ingeniously confess, they came short of the Primitive Discipline, and that the Reformation should have been carried on higher, if the Times would have given leave. They confess, they could not revive the ancient Discipline of *Levi*, and they desired a higher Conformity to the Primitive Church, (not in relation to the Hierarchy and Liturgy, but) in the strictness of Mens Lives, and the impartial severity of publick Penance. *Let*, says he, they had then their Government by Bishops, Archbishops, Chancellors, Archdeacons, &c. as we have at this day. They had so, and were fully satisfied with it, and there were no Protestants in that Age that separated from it. *Archdeacon Philip*, *Archbishop Crommer*, and several Bishops, our first Reformers and Martyrs, approved that Government, and lived and died in the Administration of it; they did not permit it only, as *Moses* did Divorces to the Jews, because of the hardness of their Hearts, (as this Minister does falsely insinuate,) but they never intimated the least Suspicion of its unlawfulness, and they plainly * declared Episcopacy to be evidently founded upon Scripture and Apostolical Institution. But these Reformers and Martyrs were ignorant of those things which are now known unto Women and Artificers, poor Men! they were under a dispensation of Darkness, and the Gospel Light of Separation was totally hidden from them.

Secondly,

* 2, 3 Ed.

6. c. 1.

* 218; and

Monu-

ments,

Tom. 3.

P. 171.

* Ibid,

Tom. 3.

P. 18.

* Preface

* the Book

of Ordin.

* 100.

Secondly, the Observer *that it is more than 1500 Years since that good Men remembred their Duty of Restoring the said Discipline*; and it is enough (says he) *that the Church carries her good Wishes with her through all Generations*; Enough certainly, while the Restoring that Discipline is impossible. Our first Reformers could not revive it, because the universal and incorrigible Wickedness of that Age, could not endure the Voice of Primitive Penance; and are scandalous Offenders now, less numerous or less incorrigible? If the Reformers are excusable, much more our present Governors, by how much the present Age is more intractable and more obstinate against the Bands of Discipline. Is it possible now to reduce Offenders to the Primitive Humiliations, the Fastings and Watchings, the Sackcloth and Ashes, the Prostration at the Church Doors, and the other Austerities of Ancient Penance? Will any of the *Dissenters* submit to this Discipline as a satisfaction for their Schism? If such an impracticable Discipline were imposed, these Ministers would presently cry out *Popery*, encourage all Offenders to oppose it, and set open the Doors of their Conventicles to receive them; such an Imposition would be vain and pernicious, it would scandalize the weak, and alienate the obstinate, and serve only to empty our Churches, and crowd the Conventicles; and though for that reason they may desire for the Church is not obliged to prescribe a Remedy, that will make the Physician contemptible, and the Patient incurable. The restoring of what *Salutary Discipline* (as the reviving of Primitive Piety) may be always wished for, but perhaps will never be attained; but the licentious Wickedness of the present Times, the general Contempt of all the Censures of the Church, and the manifold Schisms, with which it is rent in pieces, do make it not impossible; and if it were established, it is not to be hoped, that the obduracy of the *Dissenters* would be subdued, nor their Aversion to the Church be reconciled by it.

I intend not to follow this Minister through his tedious Digression about Reformation, and much less to tangle with him as far as the Temple at Jerusalem, to which forsaking his Text and his Purpose, he undertakes a Digression, and returns with these wise Observations, *That the Temple was built upon Ornan's Barn*; *That this Ornan was of Priests descent, because he had a Princely Mind*; and *that Temple Work is hard Work, is Thrashing*. This after a long Journey he brings back nothing but *Apes and Peacocks*, as himself observes of some who ramble into the Indies. These are the Saving Doctrines for which this *Thrasher* is admired by his Hearers; and since a Barn is his Delight, may he never Thrash in the Houses of G. O. D. nor produce those Sanctuaries that are consecrated to his Worship. But I return to Reformation, and in Answer to his Harangue about it, I desire it may be remembered, That this Minister does not seek the same Reformation which was sought by Christ and his Apostles, for *Presbytery* is not the Gospel, neither is Extirpation of *Idols*, the Propagation of *Christianity*. Reformation is very good in it self and the Churchmen are for it much more than the *Dissenters*, but they cannot be convinced that the

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removing

removing Decency, Order, and an Apostolical Government, is Reformation; they know, that this is the usual Vizard to disguise Sorcery, Arrogance and Ambition, and that the Sectaries endeavour not to reform the Church, but to destroy it, that they may seize on its Inheri-^{ance}; and withall they cannot but reflect upon the experience which we have had of Sectarian Reformation; when Prelatical Government was reformed into no Government, and a sober Laity into Enthusiasm, and 39 Articles into infinite Heresies, that could scarce be paralleld in all the ancient Catalogues, and in stead of the Power of Godliness, where ensued such an Foundation of Wickedness, as no Age could parallel. This was observed by the * Presbyterians themselves, and an ingenious Foreigner who then resided at London, made this Observation upon those Times, * one of the Fruits, says he, of this Blessed Parliament, and of these two Sectaries, (Presbyterians and Independents,) is, that they have made more Atheists, than I think there are in all Europe besides; and if we judge of the Tree by its Fruits, and desire to see no more such Reformation, have they reason to blame us for it.

For instance, by Edwards in his Gangra.

A Letter of a Noble Venetian so C. I. Barbarino, Translated and Printed 1648. p. 19.

Aug. con. Parmen. Epist. lib. 2. 3. Tom. 7.

3. It should be considered, that no pretence of Reformation can justify Separation from a Church, in which no sinful Terms of Communion are imposed. There is no Church in the World, which is free from all Corruptions in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, or Manners, and if the want of some Reformation be a just reason for Renouncing Communion, the Unity of the Church is nothing but a Notion, and it will be lawful for every Man to separate from all the Churches in the World, for it is only the Triumphant Church in Heaven, which is perfectly without spot and blemish. Defect of Discipline, and pure Communion, were the pretences of the Donatist and Novatian Schisms; but they were condemn'd by the Catholic Church, and * S. Austin proves at large against the Donatists, that Corruption in Discipline or Manners cannot make the Communion of such a Church sinful, nor justify Separation; and hence any one may discern, how impertinent to this purpose are all this Ministers Clamours about Reformation; for though the pursuit of it may be commendable, and the Church may need it, yet it is evident his Nonconformity and Separation cannot be justified by it, for there is no Church upon Earth, which needs no Reformation, and if Men may separate where they see any thing amiss, this Principle will carry them to a Separation from all Christian Society, and that is a plain Demonstration of the Falseness of it.

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I have now considered and weigh'd all his Pleas for Nonconformity, and having found them light and deceitful in the Balance, having sufficiently prov'd them to be false and fallacious; I conclude, that the Nonconformists were not persecuted for Righteousness sake, and that his * virulent Reproaches of the Church of England in Popish Language are no better than a *displamy*, and a contumelious Prophanation of Gods word, by making it the Instrument of his Spite and Animosity.

And one Reflection more will make it yet more evident, that they did not suffer for Righteousness; it is this, that tho' his Pleas be allow'd to have Truth and Reason in them, yet they will not justify the Dissenters Separation. Every one knows that these Ministers were not punished for not conforming as Ministers, but for setting up *Conventicles*; tho' they could not Act as publick Ministers, yet they might have adher'd to the Communion of the Church, and then they would have been in no danger of Persecution; they suffered for their Separation, and if all this Ministers Objections will not justify it, they will not justify their sufferings for it. The Pleas of Reformation I have shewn already to be insufficient; and it is evident that Lay Dissenters are unconcern'd in all the others; they were neither oblig'd to

renounce

withstand the Covenant, and the Lawfulness of Separation, and the Ordination of Presbytery, nor to declare their Assent and Consent to the Common Prayer; and this Minister himself denies not the Lawfulness of their saying so. It: Thus he hath left all his Congregation without any Defence, and it remains that they suffered not for *Righteousness*, but for an unrighteous and indefensible Separation.

Let us see whether the same Objections will justify his own Separation? Suppose the Oath of Non-resistance to be unlawful, was that a term of our Communion? was it required of all that come to our Prayers or Sacraments? and might he not have adhered to the Communion of our Church without swearing or declaring it? be it granted next that *Reordination* is unlawful to be comply'd with; was that likewise any term of Communion in Worship and Sacraments? And if they could not Preach as Ministers, could they not Communicate as Laymen? and is the unlawful silencing of a Minister to be revenged with *Sedition*? The next point is the use of the *Liturgie*; and is there any thing unlawful in all our Prayers? if he cannot Consent to some Passages in the *Rubrick*, or in a *Credo* that is very *Sedem* rectified, yet sheweth nothing sinful in our ordinary Worship; and the occasional Communion allowed by the *Presbyterians* themselves is a clear Confession of it; And Lastly, as to the *Covenant*, if it must not be renounced, cannot they worship God in our Churches without renouncing it? or does it at all oblige them to Separation? Mr. Baxter has prov'd, that the *Covenant* binds them to Communion with our Church, because, it binds to Reformation according to the Example of the best reformed Churches; but all reformed Churches in Christendom do commonly profess to hold Communion with the *Anglican* Churches in the *Liturgie*; if they come amongst us where it is used; therefore (says he) it seems to me to be Perjury and Crime, breaking to refuse Communion with the Churches that use the *Liturgie*, as a thing in very on their Account unlawful. Thus Mr. Baxter; and these Concessions are very remarkable; that Separation on the Account of our *Liturgie* is unlawful; that it is a breach of their Covenant; and is condemned by all Reformed Churches; and what new Pleas can this Minister produce to defend his Separation?

Will he urge the Pretence of necessity to Preach the Gospel; and that therefore he was forced to separate, because he could not do it in our Churches? But if he was under the same necessity the Apostle was, then he has surely the Commission and Authority of an Apostle; but if he hath no Commission from God, (let me use the words of an ancient Nonconformist) it is the Devil that hath sent him forward to Preach against the Authority of the Church; and the Prohibition of the Christian Magistrate. In short, they have neither the same Commission as the Apostles; neither is there the same necessity of their Preaching, for the Gospel is now planted in this Kingdom; it is Preached in our Churches, and it would not be extinguish'd if this Minister and his Brethren (to use his own *Semaphical* Expressions) were all them Dumb Dogs, or Breasts without Milk, or Bills without Choppers. And withal it is here to be observed, that it is evidently prov'd, that according to the Doctrine of the most learned Nonconformists of former times, both their Separating and their Preaching are absolutely unlawful.

The Sum of all is this; the Laws against the Dissenters were made for the security of the Church and State; the Execution of them was not so cruel, as is pretended; their persecuting of the Government did extort it; the Presbyterians themselves have always condemn'd Toleration; they do ever persecute whenever they have Power; this Minister declaims only against Persecution for the Truth; but all his Arguments to Truth appear to be false and groundless; and if they were admitted, would not justify Separation; and therefore the result is this; That his Call to Humiliation is an unreasonable Clamour, and that it ought to have

Defence of Cure, p. 63.

Mr. Giffard cited in the Christian Reasonableness of Separation, p. 80.

This p. 1, sect. 3, 5, 10, 11, 27.

See p. 27

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